

A plant called tyāñānou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50-1920). 228
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Niibyōūxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1853). [302]

Tsaa"sūbin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50-1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50-1913). [562]
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For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, at^hhin (the Arapaho atahinaⁿ), are used (specimen Museum No. 50-1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaaⁿ (specimen Museum No. 50-1873). [386]

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals. 561
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Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies -- which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east -- is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct- 346
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each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure.

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct.

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations *benaa"wu*, a dialectic form of the Arapaho *Bayaa"wu*, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called *beniimen*, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men."

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre *benaa"wu*, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"wu

Sacrifice-lodge,¹ sun-dance

Nôubâ"wu

Star-dance, partial preliminary

Haba"tyâ"wu

Fly-lodge, first dance

Nôuhâ"wu

Crazy-lodge, second dance

Hotibya"wu

Kit-fox lodge, third dance

Nanâ"nahâ"wu

Dog-lodge, fourth dance

Bîtabâ"wu

Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance

Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance

Benuxteâ"wu

Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

¹ Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

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hotohuu, nōubān, hahā^atyānen, nōuhunen, hotibyl, nanā^anāhā^ats or perhaps hiityāā^asūts, biitaxāānen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

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Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^anaha^awu, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^awu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiitecāoxa^awu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^awu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

CEREMONY.	ARAPAH.	GROS VENTRE.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiitecāoxa ^a wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha ^a wu)
Biitaha ^a wu	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha ^a wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Banuxta ^a wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

The place of the *biitaha*^{wu} is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men. 171 796

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows. 171 796

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes. 825

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth. [262]

In the *nañu*^{nañu}^{wu} the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The *biitaha*^{wu}, as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho. [362] [821]

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply 171 796 561

171 equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of
 796 organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which
 561 nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to
 make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in
 several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as
 great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name,
 which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had
 last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those
 of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had
 made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available
 young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same
 name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be per-
 formed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and
 previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had
 performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Ara-
 paho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving
 the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of
 men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies,
 especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once
 or twice.

561 The names of these companies resembled nicknames, and for the most
 796 part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among
 the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or
 derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names
 were obtained:

Green-grass, wanogetyi	Ugly-dogs, wasartihyl
Young-sheep, waoiei	Seed-necklaces, hity'isitya
Small-horses, tsuāngihyl	Having-back-fat, hiinanlihts
Rosebushes, yūāniisē	White-noses, nanartsōōbāts
Calves (of leg), isitsūn	Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, ātchuo- tāts
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, hi- teuānarkatūā'ēci	Holding-dogs'-tails, hotihyl nānima- nāts
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasōōn'itūāy- huts	White-blankets, nanartsōōbāts
Big-bellies, tjiitāts	Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibicōuts
White-horns, nanātsōōnitāts	Hud-horns, wanaarsōōnitāts
White-backs, nanāts'etāts	(? Stars, hotohuū)
Men-across-the-river, harsōitjānen	(? Feathered-sword-wands, likokōuts)
Different-from-benilnen, kaarsōbenil- nen	(? Having-spikes, hiitjāarsōts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies,
 the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

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It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies.

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the *nana"naha"wa*. He had not made the *biita-ha"wa*. Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?).

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The *nana"naha"wa* seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

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Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

STAR AND WAR DANCES.

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At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

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analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the *bema*"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, -- in other words, by selection,

would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

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Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces.

THE FLY-DANCE.

The fly-dance (noubu^w), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called nouban ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the ceremony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this ceremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once.

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxt¹; Arapaho, yanahut²) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the

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very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

643 It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.⁹ Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

[657] In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.¹⁰

THE COMPANIES

56 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

⁹ So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42-43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

¹⁰ For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239-68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

Tribal Organisation

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retained throughout its existence and held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company." He gives the list of company names. He is aware that the Stars are not quite comparable to the other companies but is not clear as to the position of that organization.¹¹

Our information from The Boy, whose father, Lame Bull, was the contemporary of Bill Jones, mentioned by Kroeber, and whose ceremonial experiences were the same as Bill Jones', throws some light on the subject. Furthermore we have useful material from Turn Toes, who was a member of another one of the companies. Incidental information was obtained from our other informants as well.

According to The Boy: "When a bunch of young men of somewhat similar age grew up, they were old enough to take the place of another group or company. There were a number of these companies. These young men began to have meetings and these meetings had names, although not organized as yet. Let us say 'Rosebushes' would be the name by which they were called. Another group of boys grew up and these would be called 'Hang-onto-a-dog's-tail-and-run-or-be-dragged-by-it.' Other groups would come along and be called by such names as 'Many-little-horses,' 'Potbellies,' 'Calves (of the leg),' and so on." Incidentally The Boy recognized 21 out of the 25 names listed by Kroeber as those of companies, although he gave the names above quoted quite independently of Kroeber's list.

The young men who so met and acquired names were 15-17 years of age, according to one informant, and 16-19 or 20, according to another. In any case, they decided as a body to join either of the two societies known as the Stars and the Wolf-men. We know from Kroeber's data, as well as from The Boy, that Bill Jones and Lame Bull were members of the group of young men who banded together under the name of "Bigbellies" or "Potbellies" and who subsequently joined the Stars. Lame Bull was born about 1825, so this company must have joined the Stars some time in the early 1840's. One of our informants, Charles Buckman, a contemporary of The Boy, remembers having heard that the Potbellies at one time numbered about a hundred.

¹¹ Kroeber, 1908, pp. 232-33.

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- 561 Turn Toes (b. 1860) was one with 30 or 40 other young men who, in a group known as Calves (of leg) joined the Wolf-men about 1877. Turn Toes was certain that "Having-the-breast-of-a-woman-as-pillow" and "Holding-onto-dog's-tail" were companies which had joined the Stars. According to Turn Toes' account, when his company, the Calves, joined the Wolf-men, four men from the company which had just preceded them in entry were asked by the present company to act as "elder brothers." These four considered themselves honored to instruct the new company before they would appear publicly at the next Wolf-men's dance. Lame Bull had been one of the four so selected from among the Potbellies to initiate the next incoming Star group, but we failed to obtain the name of that company.

It apparently was permissible, either before or after the company was so initiated into the society, that any one of its members could vow the least important and simplest of the Sacred Dances, namely, the Fly Dance. When a member of the company so vowed, all the members of that company, and they alone, went through the ceremony, after which they were eligible as "soldiers,"¹¹ i.e., when one of their number subsequently vowed any of the other Sacred Dances in the regular series, the company not only participated but also was in complete charge for the duration of the ceremony and had the authority to enforce whatever "laws" might be enacted. Inasmuch as the Sacrifice Dance was outside the regular series, if that Dance were vowed, the members of the vower's company could participate if they wished, but in any case those not actually dancing acted as police.

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- 561 An hypothesis which reconciles Kroeber's and our own data on the companies and age societies is the following. All or most of the young men of the whole tribe, between the ages of 16 and 19, formed a company which met informally for some time before it joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, after having gone through the Fly Dance, acted as police force during the Sacred Dances vowed by any of their number. When not participating in a Sacred Dance, the members joined in the purely social activi-

¹¹ Kroeber, 1908, p. 229, "The members of the age-societies are called *beniinen*, commonly translated at the present day as 'soldiers,' etymologically probably 'all-men,' or 'all-(?)-men.'"

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ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849-50.

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status.

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each.

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was

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561 taboo. This was the case regarding the children of "inseparable
582 friends," but whether or not it was so regarding the children of
all members of the company, mutual hospitality was frequently
extended among the members—"a man would most often invite
the members of his age group." Further, it was not unusual for
members of the same company to go hunting and on raiding and
revenge parties together. If a young man were killed at war and
[727] his body brought home, the members of his company were said to
764] have assembled and danced around his bier, sometimes sobbing and
crying as they danced.

561 As members of either one or other of the two larger societies
575 they joined with members of other companies, in the Stars and
Wolf-men respectively, to perform their proper social dance and
to participate in activities such as gambling, horse-racing, "brag-
[616] ging contests," and so on, wherein they could compete with mem-
bers of the opposite moiety. An individual seemingly tended to
choose his serious enemy-friends from among those of the rival
organization and thus is explained the spirit of competition which
Kroeber notes between the Stars and "other companies."¹³

THE SOCIETIES

575 The Stars and Wolf-men societies were organized along identical
lines and were distinguished from each other only in details of
procedure.

Each society included approximately half the total number of
able-bodied warriors in the tribe. They each had two renowned
men as leaders—two Star leaders of relatively recent times having
been Comes A-flying and Crazy Bull; two Wolf-men leaders,
Skinner and Strikes On Top. The leaders remained mounted
when the others of the society were marching on foot in prepara-
tion for their dance, and carried whips at the dance as insignia.
These men were supposed to have been outstanding warriors who
had while mounted actually counted coup against the enemy. Two
members of the last-admitted company served as *also'an* (waiters,
messengers) at the dances, and each society had an announcer,
presumably chosen from among the "old men" who had gone
through the Law Enforcer Dance.

¹³ Kroeber, 1908, p. 234.

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746 be on the night immediately preceding the beginning of the Dance
782 rite proper.

Usually others besides the principal vower would vow to join the dance and to pierce their breasts with skewers. These associate vowers would also choose each his own grandfather and, with the help of his own crier, have the same formal public announcement made of his vow as in the case of the principal vower.

As proximate preparation for the Dance, if the bands were scattered at the time, the principal vower would send out young men as runners to summon the bands to foregather for the dance. Attendance was obligatory for all.

The principal vower set up his lodge in the center of the camp circle, and here headquarters were established where conferences of the vower and his assistants were held and whence pro tem laws and regulations, decisions when and whether to move camp, and so forth, were issued.

The vower's chief assistants in these matters were his own age-group or company, a component sub-group of either the Wolves or the Stars. Whether all the Wolves or Stars respectively, and not merely the vower's own age-group, were divided into "talls" and "shorts" (see below), and served as soldiers or "police" during the dance, to enforce attendance, order in the buffalo hunt and so forth, is a point we could not clear up, but more probably only the members of his own age-group.

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70 For either the vower's age-group, or perhaps, as just noted, all the Stars or Wolves respectively of which his age-group was a component sub-group, four head officers or "generals" or "lieutenants" were chosen, and also two subordinate officers or "servants" or attendants. The two tallest of the four head officers took the taller men of the age-group (or of the larger society, Stars or Wolves) as their soldiers, and one of the two subordinate officers; the two shortest, the shorter men, and the other subordinate officer. The two divisions, the "talls" and the "shorts," constituted the "soldiers" or "police," for the dance. Each division also had an outstanding old man as herald or crier.

[224] After the people had all been gathered together, the first task was that of gathering food supplies, buffalo meat and particularly

The Sacred Dances

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For the duration of a Crazy Dance, political as well as ritual authority was vested in the age-group giving the Dance, and the ordinary personnel of government ceased for the time being to function. The Crazy Dancers ran everything; their word was law; they decided what was and was not to be done, even regarding the hunt.

The vower himself was for the time being in supreme command. He selected, as his councilors, however, four outstanding men, of middle age, older than the actual participant dancers, but not too old, men of prestige who had won recognition through merit, who had made their mark and were known as "chiefs," "successful and with good homes, good men." These four, according to Turn Toes, were chosen from among the next older age-group of the society, Stars or Wolves, to which the participant dancers age-group belonged, and were "elder brothers" of the dancers. Turn Toes emphasized more the ritual functions of these four "elder brothers." While the dancers themselves were in authority during the dance, and paid the expenses thereof, they would be helpless without knowledge of the proper rites and observances. The four "elder brothers" who had previously gone through the Crazy Dance, would be instructors in procedure to the group of younger dancers and would give the decisions thereon. The Boy emphasized more the political functions of the four "elder brothers." The vower together with these four constituted a sort of council or governing body. The five consulted and advised together on arrangements preparatory to and during the Dance, the "balance of power" resting with the vower in case of a deadlock among the four "elder brothers."

After these five got together they selected as their crier an intelligent old man who was known for his command of language. He sat in on their meetings, but without vote, so to speak. It was his duty to listen carefully and keep abreast of proceedings, and when decisions were made by the council of five he was told: "Go around the whole camp and announce that such-and-such shall be done." The five also chose as attendants or servants two young men, apparently two who had not previously joined the Crazy Dance. These two had no initiative; their task was to do what

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* 796 The Dance must have helped appreciably to enhance the status
 888 of the elderly participants, a little old to take active part in the
 182 actual hunting and game-food providing, and to have given them
 a feeling of still being economically useful members of the tribe.
 The same *mutatis mutandis* would be true of the old women in
 connection with their own Dance.

After the more or less secret rites inside the lodge of the Dance
 were over, the dancers ran a race. After the close of the dance, the
 camp moved.

888 The elderly men who as chief vowers or associates had gone
 561 once through the Dance had reached the end of the ritual trail
 and became members of the unorganized "retired old men," of
 equal rank in this respect with their ceremonial grandfathers.
 After the dance the grandfathers could not control their grandsons,
 as grandfathers could after other Dances. After going through this
 Dance, the dancer though entering in a sense the "inactive" ranks
 could still be called on to function as a ceremonial grandfather. He
 moreover was allowed very considerable freedom and latitude
 previously denied him. With his Punishers' Dance grandfather he
 [57] contracted a relationship somewhat similar to the enemy-friend
 one. In general, while of course he was given no leave to commit
 grave crimes, he was allowed much freedom in talking or acting
 vulgarly or obscenely in public and in the presence of consanguineal
 or actual relatives toward whom respect and avoidance observances
 had been strictly required of him prior to his graduation into the
 class of "retired old men."

He could, for instance, talk pretty freely with his own brother-
 in-law who was also a "retired old man" about matters concerning
 elimination and reproduction, and could indulge in a large degree
 of vulgarity and obscenity before a group which included even his
 own mother-in-law, and no one had the right to criticize him for
 this or protest against his behavior.

If, for example, he took off his breechcloth in the presence
 of a group that included such relatives, someone might say to
 him: "That's going too far." But the old man might answer: "I
 have sat on the sage brush. I have the right to do this."

■ Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 196.

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At big social or Grass Dances, the people used to be good to these "retired old men" and gave them good seats inside the hall or enclosure where the dance was held. At one such gathering, probably around 1905, a lot of these old men were present sitting in a semi-circle in front of the four chief men. One "retired old man," Fire Steel, Thomas Main's father-in-law and Lame Bull's brother-in-law, a witty old man who liked to talk, came late. Even though Lame Bull was present, Fire Steel said aloud, in a voice that could be heard by everyone: "What is the matter with you old men sitting there? You ought to sing songs of praise. Instead you are sitting there and playing 'it' so women can admire you. But your behinds are all pretty black now!" And everybody laughed. Fire Steel used to get to a dance late and in a tone loud enough for everyone present to hear used to expose these old men's past behavior,—things that they would not want said in public.

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FLY DANCE

This dance was called no:bao'wə "fly lodge." The word no:bā is at present used for "house fly." Our informants were not sure if the word, as used for the dance itself, referred to flies or to mosquitoes.

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The dance was last performed about 1907. Our chief sources were The Boy, Thick and Coming Daylight; some stray data were gotten from Turn Toes, Charles Buckman, Thomas Main and Cora Chandler. Our information confirms Kroeber's description, and supplements it in only a few minor details.

No origin story was known to our informants, beyond the item that the dance "belongs to the flies [or mosquitoes]."

The Fly Dance, like other Sacred Dances, was held only in fulfillment of a vow, a vow usually made in less grave emergencies. In dignity the Fly Dance ranked lowest among the seven Sacred Dances carried out by men.

It was held in the summer, usually around the time when one of other Sacred Dances was being performed. Consequently there was no necessity of sending runners to assemble the people, as

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*796 they would all be in camp anyhow. Our informants made no mention of criers or police in connection with the Fly Dance.

Ordinarily the Fly Dance was supposed to be gone through first, before any of the other sacred dances, but there were exceptions, as in the case of Turn Toes who joined the Crazy Dance first when he was a young man and the Fly Dance only after he was an old man. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, never joined the Fly Dance.²⁶

● [561] The Fly Dance was usually performed by youths, mostly young unmarried fellows of the age range of about 16 to 20 years as [883] nearly as we could determine. With the chief vower would be associated in the dance all the members of his own age-group or company (e.g., all the "Potbellies"), and apparently no others. They would carry it out in a body.

No women joined the dance. But, according to Coming Daylight, if a woman's son was participating as a dancer "she might go way to be back of the tent [apparently the dance lodge] and dance just like her son was doing, not making fun."

*796 608 The Fly Dancers would choose their ceremonial grandfathers from among the older men. The young fellow wishing to join the dance would fill a pipe, go with it to an old timer, and offer it to him saying: "Here is the pipe. You will be my grandfather." If the old man accepted, he would instruct the candidate in all the rites and observances of the dance and would perform the other functions therein to be noted presently. At the last Fly Dance held [circa 1907] two young fellows, Mark Black Crow and Jerry Bear, came together to Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, and offered him a pipe, which he accepted, thereby agreeing to act as their grandfather.²⁷ Cora Chandler's uncle, Sits-in-the-middle, had been "boss" of a Fly Dance which she had witnessed one Fourth of July when she was still of school age, probably this last one held.

*796 According to The Boy, the Fly Dance lasted only one day. As our informants had been eye-witnesses of this dance, it is probable

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²⁶ These exceptions occurred after the breakdown of the ceremonial cycle. [R.F.]

²⁷ In 1948 The Boy explained that in this Dance a group of boys—even more than four—could have the same ritual grandfather. [R.F.]

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get killed but she was told to go ahead anyway and have the Dance,—which she did. Other women would join the Dance with the chief vower, but under what general conditions and procedures we did not ascertain except that to qualify either as associates or as chief vower, women had to be "old" or "very old," to be "women who had seen all of life" and were "beyond their prime," not "young women." This would probably mean in Gros Ventre age terminology women beyond the age of about forty-five or fifty. On one occasion, while a Women's Dance was in progress a very old woman, whose brother had just been very badly wounded by some Sioux and who was hovering between life and death, came to the dance lodge where the dancers were gathered and said, "Well, I came in here of my own accord without anyone asking me to join. I promised to join so that my brother may get well." She was told to choose her side, "talls" or "shorts," her face was painted the ritual way, and so she joined. The wounded brother, it may be added, did not recover. The Women's Dance was not put up, as were the men's Sacred Dances, by age-groups proper since women had no such age group organizations corresponding to the men's Star and Wolf societies and companies.

The women dancers had no crier and no police force, but were divided, as in the men's dances, into tall slender ones and short ones. Two young women were chosen to serve during the rite as *âts'a'an*, attendants or waiters. "Those who were not ashamed to do things," Coming Daylight explained, "and who were quick, were chosen [as waiters]. These were not bashful or backward. They had to do whatever they were told and to wait on people. They had a lot of work to do. When there was going to be a Women's Dance, they would have to call on the members on each side of the camp circle, starting at the center opening. They would go to each lodge where there was a member." They also had to dance hard, but did not wear any caps. Their places in the dance lodge were at the door, one on the side where the "talls" sat, the other on the side of the "shorts." On both occasions when Coming Daylight served as a "calf" the two young women attendants were Woman Chief for the "talls" and Perfume (or Sweet Perfume) for the "shorts."

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